Participation of Private Sector in basic Telephone Services

7465. SHRI B. K. HARI-PRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the new telecom policy announced by Government on the 13th May, 1994, envisaging entry of private sector in basic telephones services on terms similar to those applicable for value added services, does not contain any clear guidelines to the entry conditions;

(b) whether Government foresee any threat or fall-out from the Telecom Workers Unions over privatisation of the telecom sector;

(c) whether Government have come across divergent views by eminent telecom professional that only one private corporation should be allowed in competition with DOT and that many different private companies will lead to confusion and conflict; and

(d) whether Government have gained any hindsight from several ilitigations between private vendors and the DOT over its earlier bids and whether the DOT will have the capacity of enforcing the operational code of conduct among various private companies once they are allowed entry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) National Telecom Policy gives the policy directions.

(b) Federations of Telecome workers Union have expressed apprehensions about some aspects of National Telecom Policy.

(c) From time to time Telecom professionals have expressed their views on the subjects relating to Restructuring of Department of Telecommunications and Telecom Policy.

(d) A Committee has been set up within the Department of Telecommunications to suggest guidelines for implementing National Telecom Policy.

Issue of Licences under the New Telecom Policy

7466. DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what authority will provide licences under the new telecom policy for operating value-added services such as E-mail, voice mail, data services, audio text services, video text services and video conferencing stating the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that the selection of licences for radio paging and cellular mobile telephones will remain under the system of tendering; if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that although private competition is being let in, yet the DOT will enjoy the power and privileges of a sovereign, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) At present the licences for operating value added sevices are being granted by the Deptt. of Telecom.

(b) Yes, Sir. The system of tendering for Radio Paging and cellular mobile telephones has been adopted because of limitations of availability of frequency spectrum for these services.

(c) No, Sir, Under the new telecom-policy there is a provision of participation by the private sector in providing value added services and supplementing basic telephone serices.

Pilferage of Telephones

7467. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that there has been pilferage of telephones whereby unscrupulous people have been availing STD/ISD facilities unauthorisedly in

connivance with a section of departmental employees all over the country, causing considerable loss of revenue;

(b) whether it is also a fact that complaints in many such cases have been lodged against the guilty including the departmental employees during the last three years; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, city-wise and actions taken so far against the guilty and the steps taken by Government to prevent such pilferage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Details of pilferage citywise and action taken are being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Surprise inspections by vigilance teams of the Deptt. have been stepped up Dedicated cells of CBI are being set up at metro-politan cities shortly to deal effectively with this malpractice in co-ordination with departmental officials. Action is being taken to amend the Indian Telegraph Act to take deterrent action against persons involved in the diversion of telephones, the persons who derive advantage of the diversion as well as these who abet in diversion.

Extra departmental post offices in Bihar

7468. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) how many extra departmental post offices are functioning in Bihar at present, with districtwise details thereof;

(b) whether Government propose to upgrade these post offices to departmental post offices in the near future to create scope for increase in revenue; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINMISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) There are 10,306 Extra Departmental Post Offices in Bihar Circle as on 31-3-94. District wise details are at annexer as Statement. (See below).

(b) and (c) Post Offices are upgraded on the basis of work load and financial viability. As per existing norms the work load should be atleast five hours and the post office should be financially viable, to justify upgradation into a departmental office. Extra-departmen offices which fulfil the norms are upgraded subject to availability of resources.

Statement

No. of EDPOs District-wise as on 31-3-94 *in Bihar Circle*

Sl. No.	Name of district	EDS Os	EDBOs	Total
1.	Saran	04	320	324
2.	Vaishali	04	214	218
3.	Bhojpur	03	253	256
4.	Buxar	01	148	149
5.	Gaya	..	337	337
6.	Nawada	04	175	179
7.	Jahanabad	03	147	150